

Conservation and Management Measures for Atlantic Billfish

The following table compares the preferred alternatives in the draft FMP with the final management measures taken by NMFS in the final FMP.

Preferred Alternative in Draft FMP Amendment	Final Action in Final FMP Amendment
<i>Rebuilding Trajectories</i>	
Recover overfished billfish stocks to biomass rebuilding target within 10 years.	- Establish a foundation for negotiation with ICCAT for a 10-year rebuilding plan.
<i>Size Limits</i>	
Increase minimum size limits for Atlantic blue marlin to 99 inches LJFL, 66 inches LJFL for Atlantic white marlin and 63 inches LJFL for west Atlantic sailfish.	Same
<i>Bycatch</i>	
Not in draft FMP amendment	Catch-and-release recreational fishery management program
Time-area closures - Status Quo	Atlantic Billfish Bycatch Reduction Strategy, consisting of management tools included in the HMS FMP, including: proposed expanded time-area closures for greater effectiveness; limited access; reduced quotas; outreach programs; gear restrictions; and buy-back programs.
Gear Restrictions: - Allow removal of hook from billfish; and - Prohibit use of multiple hook per bait or lure by recreational billfish anglers	Drop the multiple hook prohibition and retain ability to allow hook removal from Atlantic billfish caught on fishing gear, as long as fish not removed from water.
<i>Possession and Retention</i>	
Establish a bag limit of 1 billfish per vessel per trip, with authority to adjust, including to zero.	No recreational retention limit
Prohibit retention of longbill spearfish	Same
Maintain current commercial prohibitions	Same
<i>Monitoring, Permitting and Reporting</i>	
Require vessel permits and logbooks, if selected.	Same
Require observer on charterboats.	Voluntary observer program for charterboats. If data are not sufficient to satisfy objectives, consider establishing a mandatory observer program.

Implement tournament notification requirements.	Same
Institute a June 1 to May 31 fishing year.	Same
Promote outreach programs	Same
<i>Extension of the Management Unit and Management Authority</i>	
Extend management unit for Atlantic blue marlin and white marlin to entire Atlantic Ocean and implement regulatory actions under Magnuson-Stevens Act and ATCA for Atlantic marlins.	Same